



STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LANSING

RICK SNYDER
GOVERNOR

MICHAEL P. FLANAGAN
STATE SUPERINTENDENT

January 24, 2013

MEMORANDUM

TO: Local and Intermediate School District Superintendents and Public School Academy Directors

FROM: Carol L. Wolenberg, Deputy Superintendent *Carol*

SUBJECT: *Talk Early & Talk Often* Conference for Parents of Middle and High School Students

The Michigan Department of Education, in collaboration with the Michigan Department of Community Health, supports Michigan's first statewide conference for parents who want to gain knowledge and skills to communicate with their teens and work with other parents to support effective sex education. The conference will take place on Saturday, March 2, 2013, at Schoolcraft College in Livonia.

We know that parents, guardians, and families are the first and primary sexuality educators of their children. The *Talk Early & Talk Often* conference will help equip parents of middle and high school youth to feel more confident talking with their adolescents about abstinence, sexuality, and relationships. The conference will provide important information about topics, including the adolescent brain, sexually transmitted diseases, effective sex education instruction, talking with teens, and the influences of social media.

In Michigan, parents play an important role in determining what sex education instruction occurs in the classroom. Michigan law requires districts that implement sex education must have Sex Education Advisory Boards (SEABs) that are composed one-half of parents. To that end, the conference will also have an optional pre-conference workshop for parents who are on district SEABs to learn more about roles and responsibilities and help the district move forward with effective instruction.

Please share the [conference flyer](#) with parents in your school district, including those who serve on the SEAB. For additional conference information and to register, parents can go to www.parentactionforhealthykids.org. Feel free to direct questions related to the conference to Laurie Bechhofer, HIV/STD Education Consultant, at BechhoferL@michigan.gov, or by phone at 517-241-4437.

cc: Michigan Education Alliance

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